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Letter dated 17 March 2003 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to forward herewith, in my capacity as the representative of the current Chairman of the African Union, the communiqué issued by the Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution at its ninetieth ordinary session at the ambassadorial level, held at Addis Ababa on 17 March 2003 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dumisani Shadrack **Kumalo**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Republic
of South Africa to the United Nations

03-28946 (E) 210303

Annex to the letter dated 17 March 2003 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Communiqué of the ninetieth ordinary session at ambassadorial level of the Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution

17 March 2003, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution held its ninetieth ordinary session at ambassadorial level in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on Monday, 17 March 2003, to review the situation in the Central African Republic, following the coup d'état of 15 March 2003. The session took place under the chairmanship of Ambassador Baso Sangqu, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the African Union.

The meeting was briefed by a representative of the Commission on the recent developments in the Central African Republic.

Following its deliberations,

The Central Organ:

1. *Strongly condemns* the coup d'état which took place in Bangui, Central African Republican, on Saturday, 15 March 2003. In this regard, it recalls the total rejection and condemnation by the African Union of all unconstitutional changes of government, in conformity with the decisions and declarations adopted by the Algiers and Lomé Summits of July 1999 and 2000 respectively and the relevant provisions of the Constitutive Act of the African Union;

2. *Commends* the Chairperson of the African Union, the Interim Chairperson of the Commission, as well as the Chairmen of CEMAC and CENSAD for their prompt reaction to and condemnation of the unconstitutional change of government in the Central African Republic;

3. *Considers* that the coup d'état, which took place at a time when the process of commencing a national dialogue was under way, seriously undermines the efforts deployed by the leaders of CEMAC and CENSAD, with the support of the African Union and the United Nations, to find a lasting solution of the crisis in the Central African Republic. The Central Organ calls upon the perpetrators of the coup in that country to take immediate steps to reinstate the democratically elected government of the country;

4. *Recommends* in the interim and in conformity with the letter and spirit of the Lomé Declaration, the suspension of the Central African Republic from participating in the activities of the policy organs of the African Union, until such a time that constitutional rule is restored in the country;

5. *Appeals* to all member States, African Union partners, and the wider international community, to strongly support the efforts of the countries of the

region and the African Union to restore constitutional order in the Central African Republic;

6. *Urges* that the safety of the regional force deployed by the CEMAC in the Central African Republic be guaranteed. The Central Organ appeals to the international community to support the regional efforts led by President El Hadj Omar Bongo of the Gabonese Republic, and the efforts of CENSAD, to restore peace and security in the Central African Republic, including, inter alia, through the commencement of the envisaged national dialogue in the country;

7. *Calls upon* the regime in the Central African Republic to ensure the safety of the civilian population in the country and warns that they will be individually and collectively held accountable for any violations of the human rights of the civilian population in the country;

8. *Requests* the Interim Chairperson of the Commission to urgently establish contacts with all the parties in the Central African Republic, with a view to reviewing the modalities for a speedy return to constitutional order. In this regard, the Central Organ urges him to immediately dispatch his Special Envoy to the Central African Republic, Mr. Sadok Fayala, to the region to consult with the leaders of the region with a view to reviewing the situation and ways and means of bringing about a rapid and early resolution of the crisis;

9. *Further requests* the Chairperson of the African Union and the Interim Chairperson of the Commission to be actively seized with the situation in the Central African Republic.